Revival of Agros

3. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some States and Union Territories propose to revive an organisation called 'Agros' found useful to farmers in helping them to procure agricultural inputs, like fertilizers and pesticides at normal prices;

(b) if so, the names of such States and Union Territories;

(c) whether Government are aware that an organisation like 'Agros' has set-up outlets in the rural areas almost on par with private dealers providing employment to hundreds of educated unemployed;

(d) whether Government propose to ask Government of Andhra Pradesh to take steps to set-up such an organisation; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) There is no proposal received by the Central Government from any State or Union Territory for reviving of 'AGROS'.

(c) Department of Agriculture and Cooperation has not received any information about setting up of outlets by 'AGROS' on par with private dealers.

(d) and (e) There is no proposal under consideration of the Central Government asking Government of Andhra Pradesh to set up 'AGROS'. This is because the Andhra Pradesh State Agro Industries Development Corporation Limited is already in existence since 5.3.1968.

Indiscriminate use of Urea

4. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the indiscriminate use of urea to the near total exclusion of phosphatic and potassic fertilisers has seriously affected the soil; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government in regard there to and the remedial steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) There is no adverse effect of urea application on soil. However, to avoid indiscriminate use of urea, Government of India is already implementing the scheme on 'Concessional Sale of Phosphatic and Potassic Fertilisers' and promoting the concept of balanced and integrated nutrient management through the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Balanced and Integrated Use of Fertilisers'.

Price Fixation of Copra in Kerala

5. SHRI JOY NADUKKARA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the floor price of 'Copra' is fixed at Rs. 2900 per quintal;

(b) the demand of the State Government of Kerala regarding the floor price;

(c) whether Government are aware that at present the producers are getting more than Rs. 4400 per quintal for Copra; and

(d) if so, the reasons for fixing the floor price at a lower rate?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) The Union Government has announced the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for 'Ball' copra at Rs. 2925 per quintal and for 'Milling Copra' at Rs. 2700 per qunital for the 1997 season.

(b) The Government of Kerala had suggested the MSP of Rs. 3800/- per quintal for the 'Milling' Copra.

(c) As per the latest available information the wholesale price of 'Mill Pass' variety of copra at Cochin is Rs. 4215 per quintal and that for 'Dill Pass' variety at Kozhikode, Rs. 4700.

(d) The main objective of the Government price policy is to ensure remunerative price to the growers and to encourage them to adopt improved technology for higher levels of production with the assurance that in the event of glut in the market, the prices would not be allowed to fall below MSP and Government will procure all the quantity offered at MSP.

Improvement in productivity in the Eastern and North-Eastern regions

6. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the productivity in the Eastern and the North-Eastern region of the country is low as compared to other regions;